

Archive No. 54

Robyn Martin (19 April 1958 -)

Rob Martin was born in Prahran, moved to Nunawading when she was three and was educated at state schools. Rob's parents were concerned about issues of social justice and taught their children to stand up for themselves. Rob helped initiate a successful protest at high school so that girls had the choice of wearing pants for the first time as well as skirts. She fell in love with another girl at the age of 12 and they started living together when Rob was 18.

Rob met other lesbians and went along to a social function at the Women's Cultural Palace in Fitzroy in 1979. She soon became involved in various groups and activities. These included the Lesbian Action Group where she enjoyed the debates and the discussions about feminist ideals and lesbian lifestyles. She was one of the members willing to go out to groups like Lifeline to inform them about lesbians' particular needs and way of living. She was also a member of the softball team the Radclyffe Runners and was involved in many lesbian and feminist activities, including the Women's Balls.

Into the 1980s Rob was hired by the Western Women's Refuge as one of their paid workers for a couple of years. She joined the editorial group of the Lesbian News, contributing and soliciting articles for the two-monthly magazine. She was a member of the Women's Liberation Archives Group and also attended meetings of the Women's Building Council to keep the Building open and accessible.

Rob was one of three lesbians who were instrumental in initiating the first Lesbian Festival in Melbourne in 1990 and was an active member of the organizing group. One particular contribution of hers was hiring the plane pulling the Lesbians Are Everywhere banner that flew over St Kilda Beach on the final day of the Festival.

In the early 1990s Rob moved to mid-NSW, was accepted as a member of the Mountain Collective (formerly Amazon Acres), settled in the area and planned to build a house on the Mountain. In 2004, she was still an active member of the Mountain Collective, living in Wauchope with her partner and teaching IT.